

307

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 21 March 1996, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. Abuah

(Nigeria)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 731st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, allow me to extend a warm welcome on behalf of the Conference, and on my own behalf, to our guest speakers today: the Foreign Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, Mr. Salman Haidar; the Deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Ambassador Sergio González Gálvez; and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, His Excellency Gennadi Udovenko. The presence of these distinguished visitors among us today, especially at this juncture in the work of the Conference, is further evidence of the importance they attach to the multilateral approach to arms limitation and disarmament and to the successful conclusion of our negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. I am sure that their statements will be followed with keen interest.

I also have on my list of speakers for today the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, Dr. Ola Dahlman, and the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Italy. However, before giving the floor to the first speaker, allow me to make a few opening remarks.

As you will all agree, my predecessors as President of the Conference on Disarmament gave of their best to ensure that the objectives of the Conference were upheld in the best diplomatic tradition. Accordingly, I believe I speak for all of you if I pay special tribute to them, especially Ambassador Aye of Myanmar and Ambassador Jaap Ramaker of the Netherlands. They were both diligent in applying their diplomatic skills in handling the delicate consultations on the many sensitive issues before the Conference. I thank them for helping along the process in which we are all engaged.

Please recall that, in his closing remarks, last Thursday, Ambassador Ramaker identified the outstanding issues before the Conference, namely, the question of nuclear disarmament, expansion of the Conference and the review of the agenda. While all these issues are deserving of equal attention, it is to our continuing negotiations for a comprehensive test-ban treaty that I must now first turn.

I noticed that since the commencement of the 1996 session, there have been 94 statements all of which touched or focused on the negotiations. At the 727th plenary meeting, held on 29 February 1996, there were 32 interventions, all of which concentrated on the Iranian draft treaty text and the Australian model treaty. The raison d'être for the two texts was to speed up the negotiations. Taken together with the comments on the rolling text, there is indeed great enthusiasm and broad support for early conclusion of the negotiations. We should now translate that enthusiasm and broad support into concrete action through the elimination of the many brackets that still hold up consensus adoption of the treaty. In this context, I must recall the inspiring statement of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, delivered here two days ago, in which he reminded us that the Conference was racing against time. I hope I can count on your support in our collective and certainly important endeavour to have a clear and agreed treaty text ready for signature by June 1996.

(The President)

An important issue which has featured in this Conference is the subject of nuclear disarmament. The question as to whether the Conference should consider the issue and what mechanism to utilize for that purpose has not been agreed, despite extensive consultations by my predecessor. Nevertheless, I intend to carry the consultations forward and therefore appeal for your cooperation to ensure a generally acceptable decision. It would, indeed, give all of us in the Conference some satisfaction if agreement can be reached by the Conference to discuss and to negotiate nuclear disarmament measures, including a phased programme for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The expansion of the membership of the Conference continues to be deadlocked in spite of our decision contained in CD/1356. Broader participation of those which have applied for membership of the Conference as full members will achieve two objectives, namely reflect the post-cold-war changes and enhance the legitimacy of our decisions. Accordingly, I shall continue the consultations and explore other modalities to break the deadlock. It would, indeed, satisfy the 23 States and many members of the CD if we are able to report that the decision contained in CD/1356 can, after all, be fully implemented. But even then, this Conference should not forget that the question of membership of the 13 States is still outstanding.

I am pleased that the Conference has started to look beyond the CTBT negotiations. To this end, Ambassador Meghlaoui of Algeria is moving ahead with his consultations on the review of the agenda. We all look forward to his proposals which, I expect, should take into account enduring disarmament priorities. Let me assure him of my full cooperation.

As you know, the presidency of Nigeria will span the remaining part of the first session and the beginning of the second session of the Conference. Yet, there does not seem to be enough time to consult and reach broad agreement on these weighty issues which require our decision. To this end, the critical variables that will determine the way forward to our collective success, in my view, consist of flexibility, understanding and political will by all, on every issue.

I should now like to give the floor to the Foreign Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, Mr. Salman Haidar.

Mr. HAIDAR (India): Mr. President, I am delighted to have the opportunity of addressing the Conference on Disarmament under your presidency. I have had the pleasure of being closely associated with you at the United Nations in times past and I am well aware of your high diplomatic skills and ability. I would like to assure you of the fullest cooperation of the Indian delegation in your endeavours. I also take the opportunity to extend to His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the CD, and Mr. Bensmail, Deputy Secretary-General of the CD, our appreciation of their untiring efforts to ensure that this Conference achieves its intended goals.

In a few days, the first session of the Conference on Disarmament will draw to a close. At this stage we need to take stock and consider our

(Mr. Haidar, India)

future course of action. We have seen intense negotiations during the first nine weeks and we salute the tireless efforts of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Ramaker, and his colleagues Ambassador Berdennikov and Ambassador Zahran, as well as other Friends of the Chair. We are glad to see that progress has been registered in many areas, including some of the organizational aspects, the architecture of the international monitoring system and some elements of on-site inspection. Many delegations have spoken about the need to complete the treaty speedily. We share this intent. Nevertheless, we note with concern that large gaps remain in areas which we believe are central to the purpose of this treaty. To our regret, the opportunity has not been taken during this part of the session of the Conference adequately to address these key issues which merit the most serious attention.

The negotiations on CTBT in this particular forum may have begun in 1994 but, as we are all aware, there have been many negotiations on the subject over several decades. The absence of a shared approach at crucial times prevented a successful outcome. Since 1994, we have a sharp and explicit mandate to negotiate a treaty which would address the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects and nuclear disarmament in a balanced way. As we adjourn in a few days, it is necessary that delegations and capitals reflect on the means of obtaining a satisfactory outcome when we resume. We need a shared approach if we are to avoid an incomplete result.

From the start India has followed a consistent policy on the CTBT. We believed then, and are even more convinced today, that a CTBT should bring about a halt to the qualitative development, upgrading and improvement of nuclear weapons and should also mark the first irreversible step on the road towards genuine nuclear disarmament within a time-bound framework. You yourself, Mr. President, have referred to this issue in your opening remarks.

When India proposed the standstill agreement on nuclear testing in 1954, about 60 tests had been carried out; the number of designs was limited and extensive testing was necessary to develop new designs. The scientific and technological environment has altered vastly in the intervening period. More than 2,000 tests have now been carried out. Many designs, it is reported, have been tested and are lying in reserve with the weapons designers. Till less than a year ago, nuclear-weapon States held that they needed hydronuclear tests for safety and reliability purposes. We had disagreed. These tests are now not thought to be necessary. We are still told that other planned experiments and tests will not lead to qualitative development of nuclear weapons. It would surely be unacceptable if, after almost four decades of effort, we achieved a treaty which left open a route to improve or upgrade nuclear weapons or to develop and refine designs for new weapons. We believe that the CTBT should be truly comprehensive and that technical limitations of the present verification technologies should not be allowed to constrain our efforts towards this objective.

Even while the current negotiations were in progress we witnessed disturbing developments that appeared to indicate an intention that nuclear weapons should be here to stay. New justifications for the retention of these weapons were put forward and new roles were envisaged for them. We voiced our

(Mr. Haidar, India)

concern at these developments, and after careful consideration, put forward certain proposals which are designed to ensure that the CTBT is indeed an integral step in a time-bound process of global nuclear disarmament. These are concrete and substantive proposals. They will need to be addressed as they are essential in defining the nature of the treaty and its effectiveness as an instrument of disarmament. I trust the Conference will engage on these issues in a serious and purposive manner, so that we can take advantage of the window of opportunity which exists today.

Last week, India, along with other members of the Group of 21, put forward a formal proposal calling for the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time. This proposal was tabled after two months of Presidential consultations had unfortunately failed to achieve consensus on the subject. Nuclear disarmament is not the concern of one group of countries alone but is of universal relevance. We realize that nuclear weapons cannot be eliminated overnight. But surely, in today's world, conditions exist to begin negotiations on this primary disarmament objective. Unwillingness to move in this direction, coupled with a reluctance to focus on the disarmament aspects of the CTBT text, would raise doubt about the level of commitment to the disarmament agenda. A CTBT shorn of its disarmament context will be only an arms control treaty designed to perpetuate reliance on nuclear weapons by those countries who have concluded extensive testing programmes.

India's objectives are different. We do not believe that the acquisition of nuclear weapons is essential for national security, and we have followed a conscious decision in this regard. We are also convinced that the existence of nuclear weapons diminishes international security. We, therefore, seek their complete elimination. These are fundamental precepts that have been an integral basis of India's foreign and national security policy. It shall, therefore, remain our endeavour in the coming months to try to ensure that the disarmament agenda is not lost in a purely non-proliferation agenda.

As this part of the session draws to an end, it affords us time to reflect. We have to be fully conscious of the task which faces us. This is not the mere mechanical task of completing a text but the need to place the CTBT - a treaty of far-reaching significance - in its proper context of nuclear disarmament, as an integral step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. India will continue to contribute all its efforts to achieve this goal so that the international community attains a treaty which truly serves the needs of international peace and security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Foreign Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of India for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I give the floor to the Deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Ambassador González Gálvez.

Mr. GONZALEZ GALVEZ (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Although the representative of Mexico in this forum has already explained the position of my country on this topic, today I should like to distract you for a few minutes basically to reaffirm our support for the importance of the task before us.

I am of course pleased, sir, to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of this forum at a time of particular significance for the negotiations on the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. It is not the first time that Nigeria and Mexico have united their efforts to move forward the cause of disarmament. We have trust in your leadership and experience. You can rely on the full cooperation of my delegation, as can the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee and the chairmen of the working groups, whose efforts we support so as to achieve in good time the conclusion of the treaty which has been so long awaited and so much desired.

I listened closely to the statement by the Foreign Secretary of India, Mr. Salman Haidar. His presence in this forum is yet another demonstration of the interest raised by the work of the Conference on Disarmament and the crucial point reached in the negotiations on the topic in which we are engaged.

It is a characteristic feature of the end of this century and this millennium that the international community is taking intensive action together on the basis of shared values. Foremost among these values is the imperative that nuclear tests must cease for all time and in all environments, and constitute an important milestone along the path towards the definitive elimination of nuclear weapons within as specific a programme as possible. The General Assembly of the United Nations expressed this feeling of the international community in 1993 when, for the first time unanimously, it called for the negotiation of a universal, internationally and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. We endorsed this aim at the NPT Review and Extension Conference in 1995 and we reiterated that position in the General Assembly of the United Nations last year when we set a binding date to achieve our objective - the second part of the present annual session of the Conference on Disarmament.

If international public opinion has been demanding a halt to nuclear tests for the past 32 years, it has done so because it links this issue with the dangers of horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons and the nightmare of the development of ever more devastating and deadly weapons. Nevertheless, technological progress in the last four decades has meant that a comprehensive nuclear test ban has implications relating to vertical and horizontal non-proliferation that are different from the original ones, as well as a different political meaning. On the one hand, as regards vertical non-proliferation, the great majority of non-nuclear-weapon States - almost all of them - have already entered into a commitment not to carry out nuclear tests in other treaties which have universal ambitions or regional significance. A comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty would therefore involve new obligations only for the nuclear States and a very small number of non-nuclear-weapon States with a special level of technological development.

However, it is a fact that a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty would not in itself constitute an obstacle to horizontal proliferation given that such tests are not essential for the production of first-generation nuclear weapons. Indeed, one of the only two nuclear weapons that have ever been used was not previously tested. The purpose of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is to prevent the development of new nuclear weapons. Hence the nature of the treaty is that it will put an end to the qualitative proliferation of nuclear weapons. It clearly forms a part of the efforts to halt the nuclear arms race as an essential preliminary step within a process of nuclear disarmament. That is why it is so important for the scope of the treaty to be sufficiently broad to provide an assurance that its entry into force will truly and definitively stop the development of technologies that could substantially improve the design of nuclear weapons or aid the development of new nuclear weapons.

If a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty does not have the same technical implications today as those which were hoped for 30 years ago, its political importance is just as great because of the significance that this measure would have as an effective step towards reducing the nuclear threat. Mexico's participation in the negotiations is geared towards finding consensus approaches that guarantee the universality of the treaty that we all seek. Negotiations in this first part of the annual session have brought to light a number of difficulties that require major and urgent political decisions if we are to keep to our timetable. The first difficulty seems to lie in the degree to which the cessation of nuclear testing can be linked with nuclear disarmament. We understand that there is no fundamental conceptual difference and that all the negotiators agree that a ban on nuclear testing constitutes an essential step in a nuclear disarmament process. Therefore, it is not easy to grasp, on the one hand, the absolute refusal to accept a reference to the need for a nuclear disarmament programme, nor does it seem reasonable to deny that the nuclear test ban has a value in itself and call for a linkage to a legally binding process of nuclear disarmament. It is time to show flexibility if we really wish to attain our objective.

A second difficulty lies in what are termed peaceful nuclear explosions. The comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that we are striving for should not contain asymmetrical obligations. If these nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes are allowed, such explosions could be carried out by only a very small number of States. In addition, given the level of technological development in this area there would be no way to guarantee that peaceful nuclear explosions were not also used for military research purposes. However, we wish to see a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty of indefinite duration. We understand the argument that in the future technological progress may perhaps guarantee that nuclear explosions could be used only for peaceful purposes, and we do not rule out future modifications to international commitments to place such peaceful explosions within the reach of all States. In the future everything is possible - even the amendment of the treaty that we hope to sign this year by means of a special clause for that purpose. That is why the absence of any mention of peaceful nuclear explosions does not in our view mean that this option is ruled out.

Another difficulty that has been identified concerns the entry into force of the treaty. We would like to reiterate that a CTBT cannot be asymmetrical or discriminatory. It is clear that the treaty will be effective when it is subscribed to by those few States which, as we have said before, are so far not tied by legally binding commitments that prevent them from carrying out nuclear tests. However, political will on the part of those States alone should be sufficient and form a basis for commitments that could very well be adopted outside the context of the treaty, without the need to make entry into force dependent on ratification by a specific number of States.

Last year, at the conclusion of the NPT Review and Extension Conference, I had occasion on behalf of my country to explain the reasons that led Mexico to join in the decision to indefinitely extend the Treaty without a vote. Allow me to reiterate the position of my country now: "In deciding to extend the Treaty's validity indefinitely, we have not perpetuated the dichotomy between States with nuclear weapons and States without since this Conference has reaffirmed that in this context the Treaty's very objective is the total elimination of all nuclear weapons. For this reason, we wish to stress the importance of the commitment that the States parties undertook ... to redouble their efforts to reach that goal ... through systematic and progressive reductions and of their formal agreement to conclude negotiations on a treaty for a complete ban in 1996, with no exceptions whatsoever, on nuclear tests". In this regard, on 5 September 1995 the Government of Mexico declared: "It is obvious that if, in any of the periodic reviews, we reach the conclusion that the nuclear Powers are not complying with what they agreed to, we always have at our disposal the possibility of taking drastic measures, not excluding that of reconsidering our position vis-à-vis the Non-Proliferation Treaty, on the basis of article X of that international instrument." We cannot go on thinking of a world in which a few countries are possessors of nuclear weapons for the indefinite future. Sooner or later the number of countries asserting the same right would inexorably increase.

My Government is grateful to the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Australia for the very important contributions they have made to the ongoing negotiations. These two countries have shown us by their initiatives that it is possible to conclude a treaty on time and that there are different formulas to achieve our purpose.

The time has come for key political decisions to be taken. The treaty can be achieved with the necessary mutual understanding and essential flexibility. It is clear that States which are to enter into new commitments have legitimate security concerns which as far as possible should be addressed. But let us not forget that above and beyond the security needs of States, no matter how important these may be, lie the security needs of humanity, which call for a halt to nuclear explosions, a halt this year and for all time.

In closing, I wish to make reference to the topic of the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. My Government supports the immediate and unconditional admission of the 23 countries mentioned in the decision adopted last September. There is an urgent need for this Conference to increase its representativeness. In passing, I should like to conclude

with a thought that Mexico regards as very important. With the signing of the Pelindaba Treaty next month the entire southern hemisphere will be almost free of nuclear weapons. We are making progress towards the aim born with the Treaty of Tlatelolco of reducing areas of conflict through the proliferation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Now Mexico has drawn the attention of the OPANAL Council to the desirability of instituting links and consultations with all countries which are members of regional treaties of this kind, following the example of cooperation that guided us at the last General Assembly in dealing with the issue of nuclear testing by France.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Mexico for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. It is now an honour for me to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, His Excellency Mr. Udovenko, and invite him to deliver his statement from the podium.

Mr. UDOVENKO (Ukraine): It gives me great pleasure, Sir, to congratulate you on the assumption of your important functions, and I would like to wish you every success in their discharge. For many years, being Ambassador of Ukraine to the United Nations, I have closely cooperated with distinguished Nigerian diplomats like Ambassador Garba, Professor Cobrini, who headed the very important, at that time, Special Committee against Apartheid. They were Chairmen of this Committee and I was their Vice-Chairman. Through you, Mr. President, I would like to extend to them my best greetings and regards.

We, in Ukraine, highly appreciate the role which has been played by the CD in the field of multilateral disarmament. We also hope that future achievements of this forum will bring even more tangible results. Saying that, I mean, first of all, finalizing the text of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (CTBT). The international community has been already seeking this goal for several decades. During that time, more than 2,050 nuclear explosions have been conducted in the world. In many countries, public opinion was alarmed by nuclear-weapons tests pursued by some States and considered them as being hazardous for the health of people and posing a serious threat to the environment. In this context, we cannot but express our satisfaction with the decision taken by France to terminate its programme of nuclear-weapons tests and we call upon the People's Republic of China to follow suit.

On the whole, the period from the end of 1995 to the beginning of 1996 has, in our opinion, been characterized by notable changes in the reduction of armaments and positive developments in the field of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Ukraine welcomes the recent ratification of START II by the United States Senate and calls upon the Russian Federation to act likewise in the nearest future so that this important international legal document takes effect. Implementation of this instrument will make it possible for mankind to move towards achievement of the noble goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

In Ukraine's opinion, the signing of the Treaty on the creation of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in South-East Asia on 15 November 1995 by ASEAN States, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos is a very promising fact. And we

(Mr. Udovenko, Ukraine)

also congratulate the distinguished Deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Mexico on the statement he just made. Undoubtedly, a significant contribution to the process of nuclear disarmament will be made by the signing of the Pelindaba Treaty on the creation of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in Africa. I believe that the creation of such zones is an efficient tool for preventing horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Such zones would have to be created in other parts of the globe as well.

I think it is not necessary to remind those sitting in this hall that Ukraine was the first State in the world which declared its intention to eliminate nuclear weapons deployed on its territory. This intention was codified in the Declaration of State Sovereignty, which was adopted in July 1990 during the existence of the Soviet Union. In that declaration, Ukraine declared that it would be a non-nuclear State. Such a decision was adopted under the conditions of the so-called "Chernobyl syndrome" and as a result of the deep understanding by our people of the terrible aftermath a nuclear disaster may bring about. Thus, the decision on acquiring non-nuclear status was taken by Ukraine voluntarily following the will of its people and not under pressure of other States, although we took into account the global tendency towards terminating the nuclear arms race, this reckless race along the road which might lead humanity to a collective suicide. Our decision was also influenced by the estimates having revealed that maintenance of the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world would cost Ukraine tremendous expenditures and would be a hard social burden for the country, especially if one takes into account that eliminating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster absorbs a considerable share of the State budget. Actually, we pay from 8 to 10 per cent of the budget of Ukraine to Chernobyl victims, and as more years pass after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, more victims appear in my country. A couple of days ago, the Secretary of State of the United States and I visited a hospital in Kiev where many young children with effects resulting from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster are treated, and we saw a child of, say, one month of age with a very bad lung which resulted, again, from the consequences of Chernobyl. The more years that pass after Chernobyl, for us in Ukraine, the more victims we discover, and children especially suffer greatly. These children are now aged 10, 12, 14, and I take this opportunity to remind people that since this terrible nuclear disaster took place, 10 years ago, in Chernobyl, we are still fighting the consequences of this terrible tragedy. And, not only for our people - this is a worldwide tragedy.

Solving these two problems - nuclear disarmament and Chernobyl - which are unprecedented from the point of view of their scale, necessitates the mobilization of enormous resources which, under a complicated economic situation due to the radical transformations in our country, require an adequate international response. We hope that leading world Powers will continue to render Ukraine assistance in this process and that these problems will be solved in the not-too-distant future through concerted efforts.

Ukraine, being one of the parties to the START I Treaty, strictly observes its provisions, as well as its obligation according to the Trilateral Statement by the Presidents of Russia, the United States and Ukraine. So, the day will come soon when the last nuclear warhead will be removed from our territory.

(Mr. Udovenko, Ukraine)

Thus, Ukraine, in spite of the relatively short period of its independence, has made a substantial contribution to the reduction of the nuclear threat and creation of a safer world. The importance of this contribution was recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in the resolution adopted last year. Ukraine will go down in history as the State which voluntarily refused nuclear weapons and firmly follows this path.

Therefore, our State is objectively interested in continuing and deepening arms reductions. Within this context we consider the conclusion of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty as an extremely important element of the process of terminating the nuclear arms race. At the same time, we cannot support the inclusion in the text of the treaty of provisions which would establish a link between a nuclear test ban and nuclear disarmament. However attractive this interrelation is in practice, it might lead to the failure of the CTBT negotiations.

The "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" adopted in May 1995 at the NPT Review Conference charted a realistic programme of movement to a world free of nuclear weapons. Conclusion of the CTBT in 1996, and urgent resumption of the negotiations on the elaboration of the convention on the prohibition of production of fissile materials for military purposes should be the first steps on this road. We deeply regret the fact that the corresponding ad hoc committee was not established at the beginning of the CD's 1996 session, as it constitutes an example of the non-fulfilment of arrangements which were agreed upon at the NPT Review and Extension Conference and reflected in the above-mentioned "Principles and objectives for non-proliferation and disarmament" calling for the immediate start and earliest completion of these negotiations.

I would like to note that Ukraine supports the inclusion of nuclear disarmament as a separate item in the CD agenda. It is necessary, however, to think over an appropriate organizational format for discussing this problem at the CD and the eventual contribution the CD might make in solving this global problem. At this stage, the way towards its solution will go through the completion of the CTBT.

We are of the opinion that the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty should ban all nuclear explosions on the basis of the true "zero-yield" formula. We share the opinion expressed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his address to the Conference on Disarmament on 19 March 1996, as to the need to ensure that this treaty, "really deserves its name - that it provides for a truly 'comprehensive' ban on nuclear tests". We think it inadmissible that this treaty would make exceptions for so-called "peaceful" nuclear explosions. Such exceptions will make problematic the implementation of its provisions as it would be impossible to detect whether the test has been made for military or "peaceful" purposes.

The future CTBT should incorporate a mechanism ensuring efficient control over its observance. The international monitoring system, comprising four monitoring technologies, should become the core of such a control mechanism. Ukraine has scientific and technical potential, as well as highly skilled

personnel, which are essential for verification activities. Our seismic station has been already included in the primary seismic monitoring network. We think that the IMS would also benefit from the inclusion of our infrasound stations in the corresponding monitoring network.

We share the opinion that on-site inspections should not be of a routine character, by analogy with the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In general, when working on issues related to the creation of verification mechanisms, we should proceed from the principle of cost-effectiveness. In this connection, we advocate the establishment of a small-sized independent organization on CTBT which should be closely related to IAEA. Therefore, we support the idea of locating the organization in Vienna.

Last autumn, Ukraine welcomed a major decision, as reflected in document CD/1356, taken by the Conference on Disarmament to enlarge its membership based on the "O'Sullivan list". However, we are deeply disappointed over delays in the practical implementation by the CD of its own decision, in spite of the United Nations General Assembly's consensus resolution which invited the CD to take urgent measures for the implementation of this decision before its 1996 session.

It is our view that the situation when States that have made concrete contributions to the global reduction of armaments, including their deadliest types, remain outside the CD is not only incomprehensible but also unfair with regard to the peoples of these countries. We think that it is high time that CD member States fix the precise date of admission of new members mentioned in CD/1356. If such a date cannot be set during the first part of the session, I would suggest it should be done at the beginning of the second part of the current session.

Based on its vast experience in the field of arms control, its contribution to this process, its level of development of relevant technical and expertise capacities, Ukraine believes that it has all grounds to become a full member of the CD and participate directly in the elaboration of decisions which affect Ukrainian national interests and which can hardly be implemented to the full extent without the direct involvement of Ukraine in this Conference.

Admission of new members to the CD is an objective requirement corresponding to the realities of today's world. Such a decision has fundamental importance both for Ukraine and other candidate States. For the CD itself, it is a problem of its ability to find adequate answers to the challenges of our times and to carry out on this basis its important functions in furthering international cooperation in the disarmament field.

Without changing and transforming itself, while preserving the features of a club for the selected few, the Conference on Disarmament will be unable to increase its working potential so badly needed for resolving a number of urgent problems on its agenda. The Conference's activities cannot be effective unless appropriate decisions are elaborated on a truly universal basis.

(Mr. Udovenko, Ukraine)

In conclusion, I would like to wish productive work to the delegations and express our hope that it would result in the completion of the CTBT text before the end of the CD's session this year.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine for his important statement and for the kind words addressed to me and my countrymen. I now give the floor to Dr. Dahlman, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, who will present the progress report on the forty-third session of the Group, as contained in document CD/1385.

Mr. DAHLMAN (Sweden): I am pleased to report to you on the meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts which took place from 12 to 23 February 1996, and to introduce the progress report contained in CD/1385. Experts and representatives from 34 countries attended that session.

The main topic of the session was the evaluation of the first year of the Third Technical Test, which we refer to as GSETT-3. The Group finalized an evaluation report based on comprehensive work conducted by its Working Group on Evaluation, under the convenorship of Dr. Bernard Massinon of France. The full evaluation report is available as the Group's Conference Room Paper 262, and an executive summary of the report is annexed to the progress report.

It is in this context a pleasure to recognize the eminent services provided by the Group's secretary and the secretariat in preparing those reports and in supporting the Group's session.

The overall conclusion of this first year of GSETT-3 has successfully demonstrated that it is feasible to establish and operate an international seismological monitoring system based on the concept described in CD/1254. This concept is also the basis for the seismological part of the IMS in the NTB rolling text. The evaluation further confirms the system capability simulations carried out as part of the design work. This means that the expected capabilities of the system, to detect events with magnitude of 4 or above and to locate such events within 1,000 square kilometres, can be achieved where the station coverage is complete and when the IDC processing and analysis have been properly optimized and calibrated.

Participation in GSETT-3 steadily increased during 1995. The number of primary stations increased from 29 in January 1995 to 41 by the end of 1995. The corresponding numbers for the auxiliary stations are 34 in January and 76 by the end of 1995. As many as 45 countries contributed data during 1995 and GSETT-3 includes today stations on all continents. Thirty primary and 33 auxiliary stations in GSETT-3 are part of the envisaged IMS networks.

The International Data Centre is a central component of the envisaged IMS and the GSETT-3 IDC located in Arlington, Virginia, United States, has, with minor interruptions, been in continuous operation during 1995. This test operation has shown that the experimental IDC can fulfil the expected tasks of

routinely collecting and analysing the large amount of data contributed by participating stations and producing and distributing a set of defined products, useful for seismological monitoring and for system evaluation.

Participation in the third component of the GSETT-3 system, the national data centres (NDCs), also significantly increased during 1995. The NDCs have proven to be most essential not only to maintain reliable operations of stations and communication links but also to participate in the evaluation and calibration of the system. A large number of national contributions addressing these two latter issues were presented at the session.

The evaluation presented in the progress report is based on a large volume of data. The total data volume collected during this first year of GSETT-3 amounts to 900 billion information units, corresponding to some 300 million pages of information. From this huge amount of raw data just over 20,000 seismic events have been reported by the experimental IDC during 1995. Even if the station network is still far from complete in several regions of the world, this information flow represents a realistic load on the IDC and a good basis for the testing and evaluation of the data handling and analysis methods and computer algorithms.

As to the detection capability, it has been observed during 1995 that the system detects events with a magnitude of 3.5-4.0 with high probability in regions of the world where the planned GSETT-3 primary network is fully implemented. This is in agreement with the theoretical predictions made during the design of the network. In several areas of the world where the station coverage is still incomplete, the detection threshold is higher.

Also, the location capability varied from one region to another, depending on the station coverage. For regions where both the primary and the auxiliary station coverage approached the GSETT-3 network plan, two thirds of the reported events of magnitude 4 and above had a location uncertainty of 1,000 square kilometres or less. For areas poorly covered, only a fourth of the events were located with this accuracy.

The Group noted that the observed location capabilities are those of a system that does not yet have all the envisaged stations in operation and is not yet calibrated. The Group agreed that improved station coverage and calibration, to account for the heterogeneities within the Earth is a prerequisite to achieve a location accuracy of 1,000 square kilometres or better for events of magnitude 4 and above. The Group noted that for events with magnitudes below 4 the GSETT-3 networks may not generally achieve a location accuracy of 1,000 square kilometres or better even when calibrated. The network is simply not dense enough to obtain the necessary number of observations of events at such low magnitudes to achieve accurate locations.

The Ad Hoc Group noted that accurate depth estimation remained an area of concern during the first year of GSETT-3. The Group expects that reliable depth estimation will require further attention and notes that supplementary data from national networks will help calibrate the IDC depth estimation procedures.

(Mr. Dahlman, Sweden)

The Group took note of national investigations which demonstrated the synergy that could be achieved between seismic, hydroacoustic and infrasound observations. In particular, the Group noted that the inclusion of hydroacoustic data in GSETT-3 could contribute to significantly improved analysis of seismic events in oceanic areas.

As to the important issue of the cost of establishing and operating a monitoring system, the first year of GSETT-3 has given a fairly good account of the IDC operation as this has been well defined and focused on monitoring activities. The total capital investment, including research and development, of the IDC for handling and analysis of seismic data, has been about US\$ 50 million. This includes some US\$ 3 million during 1995. The operational cost of the IDC for GSETT-3 during 1995 was about US\$ 7 million. The operation of stations and NDCs during GSETT-3 has in general been integrated with special monitoring agencies, national geophysical institutes and universities, some of which are already funded for other purposes. It is, therefore, difficult to accurately estimate their specific cost for GSETT-3. The experiences, however, generally confirm earlier estimates reported in CD/1254.

Even if a significant part of the envisaged seismic system is in operation today, it must be emphasized that it is an experimental system and that certain components of the system have to be improved. The future plan for the GSETT-3 system includes efforts to improve the quality and operational readiness of the system. In particular there is a need to improve the quality of automated processing and event location and to further develop event characterization parameters and user-friendly IDC products. A most important issue is to improve the accuracy of event location through the calibration of the individual regions using reference events with accurate locations provided by national or regional networks. There is also a need to improve the operational reliability of participating stations and to increase their up-times and to secure the authenticity of reported data.

GSETT-3 has not only demonstrated the feasibility of establishing and operating an international seismological monitoring system and provided a large amount of scientific and technological experience; it has also established an important infrastructure which could be directly incorporated into the IMS. To maintain and develop these extensive investments made in seismic stations worldwide and in the IDC prior to and during GSETT-3 is an important remaining task for the Group of Scientific Experts. To deliver those facilities in an operational mode to the envisaged Preparatory Commission would be a valuable contribution to the establishment of the IMS in a cost-effective way.

The Ad Hoc Group therefore recommends that GSETT-3 continues until the envisaged Preparatory Commission assumes responsibility, including financing, for the work of establishing the IMS. The Group agreed that the GSETT-3 network should be gradually modified to approach the envisaged IMS network. States should therefore ensure the continued operation of their stations participating in GSETT-3 and envisaged to be incorporated in the IMS and the transmission of data from these stations to the experimental IDC.

The Group further recommends that the GSETT-3 IDC begin using the infrastructure developed for GSETT-3 and the experience gained from it to support integration of other monitoring technologies envisaged for the IMS. The resulting analyses could be reflected in the GSETT-3 IDC bulletins and thus be available to experts from all IMS technologies.

The Group agreed that another remaining task for GSE is to increase the knowledge of seismic monitoring and the operation of a global monitoring system among scientists around the world. As part of that effort a regional workshop for Africa is planned to take place in South Africa in late April and the possibility of convening a similar workshop for South-East Asia is also being considered. To have knowledgeable experts available in many countries is a prerequisite to obtaining a credible global verification system. GSETT-3 could, in this perspective, be looked upon as a large, global training exercise in which all countries can participate, especially in calibration and evaluation.

The Ad Hoc Group suggests that its next session, subject to approval by the Conference on Disarmament, should be convened from 20 to 24 May 1996. The main issue to be considered is a plan for the calibration of the networks. A draft work programme for the next session is annexed to the progress report.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events for his statement. I intend to put to the Conference for decision the recommendation contained in paragraph 24 of the Group's report, concerning the proposed dates of its next session, that is, 20-24 May 1996, at our next plenary meeting on Tuesday, 26 March.

I should now like to give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mr. Han.

Mr. HAN (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Mr. President, I would like, first of all, to warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the last presidency of the first part of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament, and express the conviction that this session will owe much of its success to your skill. I assure you, the representative from friendly Nigeria, of the full support and cooperation of my delegation in discharging your work.

Today, the CD assumes great responsibility and tasks to solve many outstanding issues in the field of disarmament. It is not easy to deal with those questions of how to advance the ritual items discussed so far, how to cope with the more acute problems and how to accommodate varying views and ideas. The people of the world aspire to a peaceful and independent life in the present circumstances where bipolar confrontation has ceased and hope that substantial and practical steps are taken in the CD to remove the aftermath of the cold war. What is particularly called for is to completely get rid of the nuclear threat which all people, from the child to the old, feel commonly.

In fact, the CD has been carrying on its work with its emphasis on the removal of the nuclear threat and nuclear disarmament not only in the past, when the nuclear arms race was serious, but also today when the cold war structure has been destroyed. Most proposals concerning nuclear disarmament were tabled by the non-nuclear-weapon States. The non-nuclear-weapon States proposed nuclear-free zones and demanded negative security assurances long ago in order to safeguard themselves from the nuclear threat.

It is in this vein that the Government of DPRK proposed in the late 1970s to make north-east Asia a nuclear-free zone and in the middle of 1980s to make the Korean peninsula a nuclear-weapon-free zone, taking into account the fact that the Korean peninsula has become the confrontation ground of the nuclear Powers, and the Government has done its best to realize the proposal.

With regard to the establishment of nuclear-free zones, my delegation takes this opportunity to express its compliments to the African countries for the fact that they will sign in Cairo in April this year the treaty on the nuclear-weapon-free zone of Africa to become the first nuclear-weapon-free continent.

The non-nuclear States have called, on all occasions, for the cessation of nuclear tests, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, assurances against the first use of nuclear weapons, prohibition of production and use of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament and the total abolition of nuclear weapons for world peace and security. They also insisted on abolishing unjust concepts and theories for the sake of justification of nuclear weapons and destroying dangerous formulas such as the protection of the nuclear umbrella which are only supporting the stand for the possession of nuclear weapons, and appealed not to accept such concepts and formulas. However, the last several decades have not seen any solution of the issues, but rather nuclear weapons have been improved by the introduction of sophisticated technology in terms of both quality and quantity. Therefore, it is worth noting that many non-nuclear-weapon States are pondering the implications of a CTBT, a top priority for the CD.

The demand for a nuclear test ban was made at the time of the nuclear arms race, in order to circumvent such consequences of the nuclear profile of today, and this demand should have been met already long ago and the top priority of negotiation at present should have been nuclear disarmament and abolition of nuclear weapons. In practical terms, the nuclear threat comes more from the very existence of nuclear weapons themselves now deployed even on the launching pad around the world, rather than the nuclear test. From this viewpoint, my delegation fully shares the stand of many non-nuclear-weapon States to define clearly the idea of nuclear disarmament in the CTBT and in particular the proposal of the Group of 21 made on 14 March 1996.

Amelioration of tension and achievement of peace are the preconditions for disarmament. We, the Korean people, who live in constant tension and danger of war, feel stronger than others about this. The CD also deals with the disarmament issue within the framework of maintenance of peace. Today, we are pleased to see the solution, or the process of solution, of disputes and

(Mr. Han, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

conflicts in several parts of the world and we welcome them. The situation on the Korean peninsula, however, contrasts, to a great degree, with these positive developments. There is no meaningful change in terms of tensions and the armistice, an outcome of the cold war, records the longest periods of 43 years in modern history.

The Korean Armistice Agreement stipulates that "within three months after the Armistice Agreement is signed and becomes effective, a political conference of a higher level of both sides be held to settle through negotiation the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, etc.", but it was not implemented, and only 9 paragraphs of the first article out of 63 paragraphs of 5 articles remain valid and the other paragraphs were abrogated. The function of the Military Armistice Commission, a single supervisory mechanism for implementation of the Armistice Agreement, has been totally paralysed. This indicates that, legally, armistice goes back to a war. Practically, it is now impossible in this vacuum to stop the large-scale introduction of sophisticated military equipment and arms and the staging almost every day of military exercises under various kinds of names.

The belligerent relations between the parties to the Armistice Agreement continue unchanged. There is no guarantee that any accident in the area will not result in a war. It is, therefore, a very urgent issue to take steps designed to maintain peace and security in the Korean peninsula and in Asia and the Pacific.

The Government of DPRK put forward two years ago the proposal to establish a new peace mechanism in Korea and on 22 February this year made a further concrete proposal in consideration of the position of the other side, that is, to conclude a tentative agreement aimed at removing armed conflict and war danger and maintaining the armistice peacefully, set up a joint military apparatus involving the real parties to the Armistice Agreement, in order to supervise the implementation of a tentative agreement and hold DPRK-United States negotiation at an appropriate level to discuss the above-mentioned issues. In the light of the seriousness of the situation and the responsibility therefrom, this proposal cannot be refused from the way of cold war thinking. If this proposal were implemented, it would pave the way for easing tensions and achieving peace in Korea, for realizing the disarmament initiatives so far made and for providing preconditions for reunification by way of confederation.

The expansion of the CD membership constitutes yet still one of the major issues at current meetings. DPRK, one of the Group of 23, strongly hopes for an early solution of the issue of expansion in conformity with the interests of all countries and for disarmament and peace. It is already eight years since my country has participated in the CD as a non-member, and there are some countries waiting for about 20 years to become members. There were about 20 non-member States that attended the CD meetings in the late 1980s, but now the number is more than 50 countries, which even produces inconveniences in seating arrangements.

(Mr. Han, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

There is a Korean proverb which says that a decade changes mountains and rivers, and I think that the expansion of the CD's membership is already overdue.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Italy, Ambassador Vattani.

Mr. VATTANI (Italy): Mr. President, I wish, first of all, to seize this opportunity to personally congratulate you for the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at a crucial moment for the accomplishment of a task of the greatest political momentum in the historic experience of this forum. I do not intend to overlook the expression of my deepest recognition and homage to your predecessor, Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, who with such great talent and diplomatic skill was able to play, at the same time, the double role of President of this Conference as well as that of Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for the negotiation of the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Our greatest consideration and recognition are also addressed to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ambassador Vladimir Petrovsky, with the acknowledgement of his propulsive action which he, together with all the staff of the secretariat, has been able to grant to the work of this body.

In the present circumstances of evolving political dialogue, I thought that the constant attention of the Italian Government on the negotiations going on in this forum had to be stressed. We have to acknowledge that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations was already happily marked by the success of the indefinite extension of the non-proliferation Treaty, as a further positive and encouraging example of the progress achieved in international cooperation under the auspices of a supreme body devoted to the universal harmonization and conciliation of the political balance of power. But an adequate and satisfactory celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations also requires, we believe, a comparable achievement in the field of the ongoing negotiations which are recognized as an additional contribution of the containment of nuclear proliferation and, as such, a further step towards a significant reduction of nuclear armaments.

The attitude of the Italian Government on these issues has been well known for a long time.

As a matter of fact, the perception of this incumbent threat has progressively taken root in the conscience of mankind, and once the situation of the cold war had been overcome, the hopes to surmount the obstacles which till now had prevented the implementation of a new order of international relations brightened intensively again.

The impetus of the initiatives for nuclear disarmament and for what is conducive to it, in a more or less long term, has produced encouraging

(Mr. Vattani, Italy)

perspectives for the early conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty. This is an endeavour for which the Italian Government and our Parliament have for some time expressed in eloquent terms their anxious expectations.

The objectives and purposes of this treaty have been clearly explained in the intervention presented, at the beginning of this session, by the Director of the United States Arms Control Agency, Mr. Holum. He gave us unequivocal indications on the positive impact of the timely entry into force of such a treaty.

The Italian Government has great confidence in the wise attitude of all the representatives of the member States, as well as of the observers, to assure a responsible contribution to the conclusion, in the agreed time-frame, of the ongoing negotiations. This achievement should pave the way to positive evolution of the entire policy of international security and to its definition under new principles and endeavours.

I feel convinced and confident that the wishes I am expressing may be shared by all the partners of the European Union whose presidency is at present entrusted to my country. I wish to underline the common will expressed by all members of the Union to secure the maximum support to reach our objectives in the agreed time-frame of June 1996, which has been made clear in unequivocal terms.

The Italian position in the negotiations for a nuclear-test-ban treaty characterizes itself, as is well known, for the adherence to a formula of a total exclusion of any nuclear-test explosion. Consequently, for us any compromise relating to the request for exceptions for so-called "peaceful nuclear explosions", which would practically nullify the spirit and the purpose of the treaty, is unacceptable. It seems, in fact, impossible to make a distinction, and to draw a limit, between the information and data achievable through a nuclear-weapon test and a so-called peaceful explosion: both enterprises could give similar results applicable in the military field and in the improvement and proliferation of nuclear armaments.

Concerning the mechanism of entry into force of the treaty, my Government heads towards the secure involvement in the ratification of all the most concerned parties.

In the Executive Council of the organization for the implementation of the treaty, Italy aims at attaining a position in line with her commitments in sharing the financial burden of the United Nations system, a criterion which should gain a privileged consideration.

An efficient and highly reliable system of verification with the capability to strongly deter any attempt to circumvent the rules of the treaty should offer an innovatory and fundamental instrument to provide adequate assurances of the greatest security. Moreover my Government believes that - in view of the particular nature of the tests banned by the treaty - it is of the greatest importance that procedures be developed to capture time-critical phenomena through on-site inspection carried out promptly after a possible ambiguous event.

(Mr. Vattani, Italy)

The Italian delegation will not fail to assure, as it has done in the past, its full support to reach satisfactory compromise solutions in this negotiation and, for this purpose, welcomes the announced intention of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, Ambassador Ramaker, to produce a streamlined text of the treaty to facilitate the search for common denominators on the basic issues.

I do not intend to overlook the activities of this body beyond the present impending aims, and I wish to stress my Government's expectations for the future tasks already assigned to the Conference as the sole multilateral global disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. In cooperation with the deliberations and recommendations submitted by the Disarmament Commission of the United Nations to the General Assembly, the working perspectives of the Conference on Disarmament reflect a great number of intents. In this regard, I would like to express my fervent wish for the already undertaken work of the Special Coordinator for the agenda of the Conference, the representative of Algeria, Ambassador Meghlaoui, whose consultations I hope will attain unanimously shared results without any linkage or precondition which could hamper and penalize initiatives commonly considered necessary and urgent.

The road to the reduction of nuclear armaments is bound to pass through some unavoidable stages. First among them, and already identified a long time ago, is the negotiation of a non-discriminatory multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. This is the indispensable wedge of an expanding mosaic of conditions necessary to a concrete realization of further developments to strengthen and complement the non-proliferation regime.

The issue of the reduction of conventional armaments deserves also a special priority not only to adequately balance the present convergence of interest on nuclear disarmament but also to face, with credible actions of containment, the worrying proliferation of uncontrolled or illicit spread of conventional arms. This is a problem which is the cause and origin of so many conflicts whose primary victims are civilian populations and whose dramatic impact on the economic and social development of entire regions is dramatically evident.

I have already stressed the importance and validity of the tasks assigned to this forum, as the sole multilateral body for disarmament negotiations. To make its goals a useful reality, and taking into account the present constant evolution of international relations as well as the evident restructuring and adjustment of regional political influences and assets, the Conference is inevitably bound to revise its present composition in line with factual realities. For this reason the issue of the expansion of the Conference is acquiring increasing urgency. I therefore wish to recommend the overcoming of the residual difficulties for effective and conclusive implementation of the so-called "admission in principle" decided by this Conference on 21 September 1995, having due regard to the unavoidable measure of enlarging

(Mr. Vattani, Italy)

the said admission to all the countries which have presented a formal request to join this Conference, including those partners of the European Union who have been till now excluded.

On the eve of the new century, some fundamentals of international relations appear in an even clearer light: the globalization of the interests at stake, the increasing internationalization of all social and political issues, the interdependence of economic interests, the need to face the challenges of the present world in a spirit of solidarity and conciliatory attitude for not always convergent exigencies, the common effort to build peace to which we all are due to give our contribution in order to enjoy its dividends.

I hope that these unavoidable points of reference will deserve the attention of this forum, in the pursuit of its aim.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Italy for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the Republic of Korea.

Mr. HWANG (Republic of Korea): First of all, Sir, my delegation would like to associate itself with the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of this Conference. My delegation asks for the floor to make a brief comment on what the representative of DPRK said. It seemed to me that the representative of DPRK did not see things in their right perspective. I would like to make two things clear.

First of all, my delegation would like to explain the reason why the foreign forces cannot be withdrawn until now. He mentioned the foreign force - that means the United States forces in Korea. The United States forces in Korea (USFK) have been stationed in Korea since they came to our aid under the flag of the United Nations to repel the Communist aggression in the Korean war which was triggered by North Korea in 1950. Therefore, the USFK was first called in by North Korea.

Since North Korea's threat has not diminished even after the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement in 1953, the USFK has continued to be stationed in the Republic of Korea (ROK) on the basis of the ROK-United States mutual defence treaty, contributing to the maintenance of peace and stability on the Korean peninsula for over 40 years.

The USFK, therefore, needs to stay in the ROK not only to ensure a military balance but also to deter another outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula as long as the North Korean threat remains. At the same time, the USFK has been playing a significant role in maintaining the balance of power in the East Asia region.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I would like to call the attention of the CD to the recent IAEA Board meeting which took place from 18 to 20 March this year. This was a meeting which expressed concern over DPRK's

(Mr. Hwang, Republic of Korea)

negligence in its cooperation with IAEA and fulfilment of its obligations under the IAEA safeguards agreement. The North Korean failure to fully cooperate with IAEA is a threat to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. HAN (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I am sorry to take the floor again, but I must say a few words. The delegate of South Korea mentioned the Korean war in 1950. I would like to ask him to read a book untitled An Unknown War published in London and a book written by an American journalist who observed the starting of the war. I only wish to add the fact that when there was a surprise attack against my country at dawn on 25 June 1950, we made a nationwide broadcast about this invasion, but there was no announcement in South Korea.

With regard to IAEA relations, we are faithfully implementing our obligations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement. I wonder if I could come in here and make an observation which is in the form of an appeal. I think the last two interventions have carefully elucidated the points and the issues, and we are all very clear on it. I wonder if I could prevail on the representative of the Republic of Korea not to insist on taking the floor at this time. You have the floor, Sir.

Mr. HWANG (Republic of Korea): My delegation is very reluctant to get involved in any political argument. I want to leave the answer to all the members of the CD here.

The PRESIDENT: We have exhausted our list of speakers, and as you see before you, the secretariat has circulated, at my request, a revised tentative timetable of meetings for next week. This timetable was prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and is, as usual, merely indicative and subject to change if necessary. On this understanding, may I assume that the timetable is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: At the request of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Nuclear Test Ban, I should like to inform delegations that immediately after this plenary, a short meeting of Working Group 1 of the Ad Hoc Committee will take place. This, in turn, will be followed by a meeting of the Friend of the Chair on on-site inspection.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 26 March 1996 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at noon.